

PARKS & TRAILS COMMISSION MINUTES
March 24, 2014

Chair Kalkofen called the regular meeting of the Baxter Parks and Trails Commission to order at 4:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Jim Kalkofen, Commissioners Gail Brecht, Lori Thramer, and Mari Holderness.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ken Hasskamp and Council Liaison Jim Klein

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development (CD) Director Josh Doty

OTHERS PRESENT: None

Approval of the Minutes

Commissioner Brecht asked what the June completion and August final completion meant for the pavilions. Director Doty stated that he was pretty sure that the idea was to complete the pavilions by the end of June. He added that he wasn't sure about the August date but that he would check with Public Works Director Walter to confirm the dates. The Commission agreed that it could be a situation where additional time may be needed due to weather or delays in construction.

MOTION by Commissioner Brecht, seconded by Commissioner Holderness to approve the regular meeting minutes of February 24, 2014 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion of Parks and Trails Component of Comprehensive Plan Update

Memorywood to Whipple Beach Trail

Chair Kalkofen informed the Commission of the article in the Brainerd Dispatch. CD Director Doty informed the Commission that the Council preferred a paved trail versus a chip trail, as that is what has been done throughout the city. He also informed the Commission that prior to submitting the five step process at the County, the City Council wants to make sure that we include any other trails that we would want on the County property. CD Director Doty indicated that the other trail on the current comprehensive plan is along Oakwood Drive from Cedar Scenic Drive to the Clearwater Trail. He asked the Commission if there had been previous conversations regarding which side of the road the trail should go on. The Commission reviewed a map and decided the east side would have less congestion. They added that closer to the park parking lot, there would need to be a pedestrian/trail crossing with signs. Commissioner Thramer stated that she liked the idea of a paved trail. The Commission agreed, stating it would most likely be used more by people with strollers and cyclists. The Commission was in agreement that staff should pursue the paved trail.

Fitquest Trail Signage

CD Director Doty stated that in the packet, there are several different display options for signage for this trail. He said that the signs can be mounted just about anyway you would want. He added that we received a quote for a 24" x 24" aluminum laminated sign, which is roughly \$68.00 each. Commissioner Holderness liked the sign that was lower to the ground and angled, as she is a shorter person and it would be easier to read. The Commission discussed how the

language should read on the signs and how to let the persons using the trails know if they are still in Baxter. CD Director Doty stated that there would be a need to speak to the other property owners outside of Baxter and see if the trails could be re-established prior to the signage being installed.

Commissioner Brecht stated that she thought that there was a fund in place to assist with the cost of the trail. CD Director Doty stated that there is a fund in place. He added that all of the property owners should be involved in the discussion prior to the signs going up and funds being spent. Commissioner Thramer stated that it could be possible to color code the trail on the sign to show what part is Baxter and what is privately owned/maintained.

CD Director Doty reminded the Commissioners that this trail system does not have a separate city parking lot. He added that the Fitquest and hotel parking lots have been used in the past. The Commission added that the Fitquest parking lot is rarely full. Chair Kalkofen stated that with the signs, there should be additional laminated signs made for display inside the businesses in an area to let people know about the trail.

CD Director Doty reiterated that the Commission liked the lower, angled sign with language regarding where "they" are on the trail, the location of the trail, and distances. Chair Kalkofen stated he would also like to see some records indicating the finances are being paid by the association and trails are maintained by the City of Baxter. Chair Kalkofen did not want the Baxter residents to think that their tax dollars were paying for this trail.

Memorywood to Whipple Beach Trail

CD Director Doty stated that a concern the City Council brought up with purchasing the lot on Memorywood is that the lot is one acre and is plenty of land for a new home, thus removing the opportunity for development. The Commission discussed several options for the trail connection.

Berrywood Park Buffer

CD Director Doty stated that the City Council was in support of the idea of a buffer at Berrywood and directed staff to contact the property owner. Staff has met initially with property owner to see if there is an option to purchase land for a buffer. He noted that he will keep the Commission informed with any developments.

West Baxter-Mississippi Overlook Park Area

CD Director Doty noted that at the previous meeting there was discussion about the Potlatch property and who owns which properties surrounding Mississippi Overlook Park. He went through an aerial photo, which identified the surrounding property owners. The Commission reviewed the updated maps that were in the packet.

Chair Kalkofen noted that there was discussion of a ski trail going straight down to the park. Chair Kalkofen asked if there has been any discussion with Potlatch regarding the price for their property. CD Director Doty stated that there has not been any discussion at this point. The Commission discussed which 40-acre parcels would be more desirable. Chair Kalkofen asked that CD Director Doty contact Potlatch to see if they were interested in selling any of the property.

Clearwater Road Trail-Inglewood Drive to Highway 371

Chair Kalkofen asked if this is basically widening the trail. CD Director Doty said that this was regarding the east/west portion of Clearwater between Inglewood Drive and Highway 371. He asked the Commission if there had been previous conversation on this location for a trail. He had noted that the Commission had not identified this area for a future trail.

Commissioner Brecht stated that she hasn't biked that area. Chair Kalkofen stated that he has and it is a wide road. There has been conversation in the past, but it is not a priority at this time.

Grand Oaks/Inglewood Drive Area

CD Director Doty stated that south of Clearwater Rd. between Grand Oaks and Inglewood is some city owned property that includes unofficial motorized trails. He asked the Commission if there is any interest in improving this area with trails. Commissioner Holderness indicated maybe in the future but at this point, there is already a lot going on. Chair Kalkofen indicated that he would like to drive over there and look at the property then discuss it at the next meeting with a map that shows property ownership. CD Director Doty noted that this area includes a lot of wetland.

Implementation Plan

CD Director Doty stated that a draft of the comprehensive plan has been provided to staff. Staff is currently reviewing the plan and will place it on the web for the Long Range Planning Commission to review prior to their April 14th meeting. He will have the parks portion of the comprehensive plan at the next Parks Commission meeting for the Commission to review. He stated that typically, at the end of each chapter is an implementation plan that helps staff determine what each project priority is in terms of timing. He asked each Commissioner to the timing of the draft implementation items for new parks, existing park facilities, and trails and bring the discussion back to the next meeting.

Chair Kalkofen suggested that the Commission review each item and think about each item for the next meeting. Commissioner Brecht stated that this Commission is based on the money that comes in from development, and it varies if the Commission can do bigger projects.

The Commission discussed each item to make sure there was nothing left off the list of priorities. The Commission stated concern about indicating a timeframe since things can change. CD Director Doty explained that he understands that hesitancy, but added that timeframe is intended to be general and if priorities change, that the changes can be reflected in the CIP or the City can amend the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Brecht gave the history of the concession stand that had been proposed at OK park several years ago that was tabled due to the land issue with the school district. Commissioner Brecht added that Fairview Rd. trail needed to be added to the trail list. Chair Kalkofen requested that the golf course trail area be added.

Chair Kalkofen thanked CD Director Doty for putting together good information in the packet.

Other Business

CD Director Doty asked if the Commission is OK if for future meetings, staff asked that Commissioners call if only if they are not going to be attending a meeting. The Commission agreed.

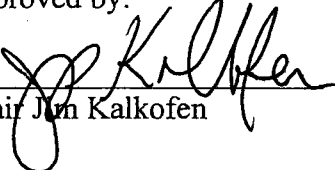
Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for April 28, 2014 at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Thrasher, seconded by Commissioner Brecht to adjourn the meeting at 5:24 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Approved by:


Chair John Kalkofen

Respectfully submitted,


Shanna Newman CD Clerk